

Media Release

The Hon James Merlino MP
Acting Premier
Minister for Education
Minister for Mental Health



Saturday, 13 March 2021

DELIVERING NEW MENTAL HEALTH JOBS AND SUPPORT ACROSS VICTORIA

The Andrews Labor Government is making sure mental health workers across Victoria get the support and training they need – delivering new jobs and creating scholarships for more mental health nurses.

Minister for Mental Health James Merlino today opened applications for the new Postgraduate Mental Health Nurses Scholarships and marked the delivery of the first instalment of the mental health workforce reforms which will address critical workforce shortages in the sector and boost mental health support for all Victorians.

The new jobs and reforms were funded as part of a \$235 million *Recovery Workforce* package following recommendation by the *Interim Report of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System*, and include:

- an extra 29 full-time Junior Medical Officer positions across Victoria, which is equivalent to 130 additional mental health medical trainee rotations, ensuring critical on-the-ground training opportunities – part of a \$2.3 million investment
- an expansion of the Graduate Mental Health Nurse program, creating 80 new positions across the state
- 35 extra Senior Nurse Educators supporting the Graduate Mental Health Nurses, with positions prioritised in rural and regional Victoria, following an initial investment of \$7.96 million
- 70 new scholarships for training Postgraduate Mental Health Nurses – supported by an investment of \$1.53 million to pay the full course-cost for nurses.

As part of these workforce recommendations, by 2023 all medical trainees in Victoria complete a mandatory psychiatry rotation, giving all new doctors skills and knowledge of mental health that they can use in their medical careers to the benefit of the community.

The Labor Government is investing \$14.3 million to deliver these initiatives as part of the commitment to address clinical workforce shortages in the mental health sector and support future expansion.

The recommendations will deliver 143 new roles to the mental health sector across Victoria.

The Final Report of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System was handed down on 2 March 2021, and the Labor Government will implement every single one of its recommendations.

Information about the scholarships can be found at acn.edu.au/scholarships

Quotes attributable to Minister for Mental Health James Merlino

“Boosting our mental health workforce is critical to ensuring Victorians get the support they deserve and delivering on the Royal Commission.”

“These reforms mean more doctors and nurses will get the mental health skills needed, boosting capacity across the state.”

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